and public sectors are covered under the provisions of Sick Industrial Companies (Special Provisions) Act, 1985 (SICA). Such sugar mills are required to make a reference to the Board for Industrial and Financial Reconstruction (BIFR) whenever their accumulated losses become equal to or more than the net-worth. If the rehabilitation schemes sanctioned by BIFR provide for any relief/concession from this Ministry, the scheme is considered as per the existing guidelines. In addition, as regards the cooperative sugar mills a Committee is constituted by the Ministry of Consumer Affairs, Food and Public Distribution (Department of Food and Public Distribution) which considers the proposals of the potentially viable sick sugar mills of this sector. The interests of workers employed in sick/ closed sugar undertakings are protected by owner/promoters and State Governments (in case of PSUs) as per the relevant Acts and Regulations.

Forced deposits in cooperative sugar mills by Farmers in Maharashtra

328. SHRI S.S. AHLUWALIA: Will the Minister of CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that several cooperative sugar mills in Maharashtra have been enforcing deductions from due payments of farmers supplying sugarcane, as deposits to be utilized for modernization/expansion of mills and promising refunds thereof with interest;

(b) if so, the details thereof, including identity of the mills which collected such deposits and the total sums collected by each;

(c) the details of mills which carried out modernization/expansion;

(d) the mills which have repaid deposits with interest to respective sugarcane suppliers and those who defaulted to repay indicating the sums outstanding against each mills; and

(e) the action taken against defaulters?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (DR. AKHILESH PRASAD SINGH): (a) The Government of Maharashtra have informed that some cooperative sugar mills in the State have been enforcing deductions from the due payment of farmers supplying sugarcane as deposits to be utilized

for modernization/expansion of mills and promising refunds thereof with interest.

(b) to (d) The information is being collected from the Government of Maharashtra.

(e) The Government of Maharashtra have stated that they have issued instructions to the respective cooperative sugar mills to repay the amount of deposits along with interest when it is due for repayment.

Issue of new BPL Cards *vis-à-vis* Supreme Court order

329. SHRIMATI BRINDA KARAT: Will the Minister of CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have taken any step so far, to deal with the situation arising out of the interim order of the Supreme Court to maintain *status quo* with regard to issuance of new BPL cards for the public distribution system;

(b) whether BPL quotas are derived from BPL census or from Planning Commission estimates of poverty; and

(c) the manner in which Government intend to arrive as such quotas in future?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (DR. AKHILESH PRASAD SINGH): (a) The directions of Supreme Court are with regard to the BPL Census, 2002 conducted by the Ministry of Rural Development, in all the rural areas of the country for implementation of various programmes of the Ministry. These directions therefore, do not prevent the State Governments to issue ration cards under TPDS as per the PDS (Control) Order, 2001 issued by the Government of India, in order to include the eligible households and exclude ineligible households.

(b) and (c) Under the Targeted Public Distribution System (TPDS), the allocation of foodgrains to all the State Governments/UT Administrations is made on the basis of poverty estimates of Planning Commission for the year 1993-94 and the population projections of the Registrar General of India as on 1.3.2000 subject to the number of BPL families identified and number of distinctive ration cards issued to them, whichever is less, at the